

The following excerpt is from a speech given by 2017-2018 nursing senior class representatives, Alison Nielsen and Lizzie Costello, during the Nursing Pinning Ceremony.

It is truly a gift to care for a person. We, as registered nurses, will spend time with our patients in their most vulnerable state. We are given the gift to help them heal, welcome a new life into their family, say goodbye to a loved one and are with them every other moment in between. We all came to this program with different gifts, but with the same goal in mind: to help and care for people. Our various gifts and desires to care for others were first recognized when we received our admission letters. From there, we have been molded into being the best caregivers we can be. We learned how to advocate, educate, listen, give holistic care, and be competent nurses for the sake of our patients.

This three-year journey has not always been a walk in the park, however. We have been through quite a bit of ups and downs together through our time here at Cora Miller Hall. We've all had days spent crying about how difficult nursing school was, and we have all felt the losses of those close to us. Through these trying times, however, we have been able to grow closer as a class and truly appreciate the time that we have had in this program. We are very fortunate to have gone through such an incredible, vigorous program and have had so much support from faculty, staff, and our classmates. I know each one of us can say with confidence that we have gained the knowledge, attitude, and skills needed to be prepared for this moment: graduation and the start of our professional careers.

I am sure we have all been asked, "Why do you want to be a nurse?" Followed by "Being in the hospital is a horrible experience, people are sick all the time, you are over worked, and the number of germs in a hospital is insane." I think we can all say that we want help preserve the dignity of our patient by assisting them with the healing process or simply promoting the best quality of life for them. Whether it is getting to know them, listening to them, encouraging them, or tucking them in with a warm blanket, we all feel especially privileged to have the calling to be a nurse. Nursing is not just a job where we clock in and clock out. We have the wonderful opportunity to wake up every day and be a positive difference in this world. Many people say nursing is such rewarding career, and it will be. We pray that in times of struggle and doubt that we all will be able to remember why we wanted to become a nurse in the first place and be able to move forward. We have been trained to drive the field in which we are a part of. We will not be stagnant, and we will constantly challenge our colleagues to do better and be better for the sake of our patients. Most importantly, we will always "Find the good," as Mrs. Hess says. We are surrounded by excellent future nurses in this room that will be the good in this world, and we cannot be more excited for us all to begin this wonderful journey.